



**NATIONAL PROGRAMME COORDINATION OFFICE
OF
SPECIAL AGRO-INDUSRIAL PROCESSING ZONES PROGRAMME**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF A TECHNICAL
ASSISTANT TO THE NATIONAL RURAL INSTITUTIONS DEVELOPMENT
OFFICER (RIDO) FOR THE SPECIAL AGRO-INDUSTRIAL PROCESSING
ZONES (SAPZ) PROGRAMME**

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TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF A TECHNICAL ASSISTANT TO THE NATIONAL RURAL INSTITUTIONS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (RIDO) FOR THE SPECIAL AGRO-INDUSTRIAL PROCESSING ZONES (SAPZ) PROGRAMME

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), through the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (FMAFS), is implementing the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones (SAPZ) Programme in collaboration with the African Development Bank (AfDB), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), and participating State Governments. The Programme is a flagship initiative under the AfDB's Feed Africa Strategy and aligns with Nigeria's Medium-Term National Development Plan (2021–2025), the National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (NATIP), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SAPZ Programme aims to transform rural economies into zones of prosperity by promoting inclusive and sustainable agro-industrial development. Its development objective is to support increased agricultural productivity, value addition, market access, private sector investment, and job creation (targeting at least 400,000 direct jobs and 1.6 million indirect jobs in Phase I), with a strong focus on youth and women. Phase I is being implemented in seven states (Cross River, Imo, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara, Ogun, and Oyo) plus the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), covering the establishment of Agro-Industrial Hubs (AIHs), Agricultural Transformation Centres (ATCs), irrigated lands, farm-to-market roads, and supporting infrastructure. Subsequent phases will expand nationwide.

A core pillar of the Programme is the development of **rural institutions** to ensure smallholder farmers, producer groups, and agribusinesses are effectively integrated into value chains. This includes the

formation, strengthening, and sustainability of Farmer Organizations (FOs), Multi-Stakeholders Agribusiness Forums (MAFs), cooperatives, Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs), Financial Service Associations (FSAs) and other community-based institutions linked to ATCs for aggregation, input supply, extension services, market linkages, and access to finance. These institutions are critical for reducing post-harvest losses, enhancing bargaining power, promoting inclusive governance, and ensuring climate-resilient and gender-sensitive operations.

The National Coordination Office (NCO) in Abuja oversees implementation. The **National Rural Institutions Development Officer (RIDO)**, located at the NCO, leads the design, coordination, and oversight of all rural institutions development activities across participating states. The RIDO collaborates closely with State Programme Implementation Units (PSIUs), Agricultural Development Programmes (ADPs), service providers, and other NCO units (e.g., Agricultural Productivity, Gender & Social Safeguards, M&E, Environment & Climate Change).

To enhance the RIDO's capacity in delivering high-quality, timely, and results-oriented support, especially given the multi-state, multi-partner, and time-bound nature of the Programme, a full-time **Technical Assistant (TA)** is required. The TA will provide specialized technical, operational, and coordination support to the RIDO.

2.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The primary objective of the Technical Assistant is to provide high-level technical and operational support to the National Rural Institutions Development Officer in the effective planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of rural institutions development activities under the SAPZ Programme. This will ensure the establishment of vibrant, inclusive, sustainable, and market-oriented rural institutions (FOs, cooperatives, MAFs, etc.) that empower smallholders (particularly women and youth), improve productivity, facilitate

market access, and contribute to the overall Programme development objective. The TA will ensure that activities are aligned with national policies, international best practices, and the programme's results framework.

3.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES, TASKS, AND EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The TA will work under the direct supervision of the NRIDO and in close collaboration with other NCO specialists, PSIUs, and relevant stakeholders. Key responsibilities include (but are not limited to):

3.1 Strategic and Technical Support

- I. Assist in the development and updating of strategies, guidelines, operational manuals and toolkits for rural institutions development, including group formation, legal registration, governance structures, and sustainability frameworks.
- II. Support the design and implementation of capacity-building programmes for FOs, cooperatives, MSMEs and MAFs, incorporating modules on business planning, financial management, climate resilience, gender mainstreaming, nutrition, and value addition (using tools such as GALS—Gender Action Learning System—where applicable).
- III. Facilitate the integration of rural institutions with ATCs, AIHs, and private sector actors for reliable feedstock supply, aggregation, and market linkages.

3.2 Coordination and Implementation

- I. Coordinate with PSIUs, ADPs' Rural Institution Development Departments, extension services, and service providers for the identification, mobilization, training, and strengthening of at least 3,000+ FOs across participating states.
- II. Organize and facilitate stakeholder workshops, training-of-trainers sessions, and field missions to promote inclusive participation (targeting $\geq 40\%$ women-led or women-only groups and youth inclusion).

- III. Liaise with financial institutions, NIRSAL, and other partners to enhance access to finance and de-risking mechanisms for rural institutions.

3.3 Stakeholder Engagement & Partnerships

- I. Assist in mapping, profiling, and registering eligible rural institutions (cooperatives, farmer groups, etc.) for participation in the SAPZ value chains.
- II. Support the facilitation of inclusive dialogue platforms to negotiate contract farming agreements, out-grower schemes, and benefit-sharing mechanisms between smallholder groups and private sector anchor firms.
- III. Serve as a secretariat for the Rural Institutions Working Group, preparing minutes, tracking action points, and disseminating information.

3.4 Financial Inclusion and Linkages

- I. Support initiatives to strengthen linkages between rural institutions and:
 - a. Financial institutions (banks, microfinance institutions, FSAs)
 - b. Input suppliers and service providers
 - c. Off-takers and processors within SAPZ
- II. Assist in promoting access to credit, savings, and insurance products.
- III. Support implementation of financial literacy programmes.

3.5 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting

- I. Support the NRIDO in tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) related to rural institutions, such as number of farmers organized, volume of produce aggregated, percentage of women/youth-led enterprises, number of functional FOs, governance scores, member income increases, O&M fund contributions.

- II. Contribute to Programme Annual Work Plans and Budgets (AWPBs), quarterly progress reports, and other reporting requirements for AfDB, IFAD, IsDB, and FGN.
- III. Conduct regular field monitoring visits (in coordination with M&E Unit) and prepare analytical reports on challenges, lessons learned, and best practices.
- IV. Assist in the documentation of success stories, knowledge products, and policy briefs on rural institutions development.
- V. Prepare high-quality technical reports, quarterly progress reports, and briefs for the NRIDO, NPCU Coordinator, and financing partners.
- VI. Maintain a robust database (MIS) of all rural institutions engaged under the programme, including their governance structures, financial health, and production capacity.

3.6 Other Duties

- I. Represent the RIDO in technical meetings, steering committees, and donor missions as delegated.
- II. Support the integration of cross-cutting themes (gender, youth, climate change, nutrition, and safeguards) into all rural institutions activities.
- III. Perform any other duties as may be assigned by the RIDO or National Programme Coordinator (NPC).

Expected Deliverables (to be agreed in the work plan and reviewed quarterly):

- I. Inception report with detailed work plan within 30 days of contract commencement.
- II. Quarterly technical progress reports on rural institutions activities, including status of FOs/MAFs, FSAs, training outcomes, and recommendations.
- III. Annual contribution to the Programme's AWPB and Results Framework updates.

- IV. At least two (2) knowledge products or case studies per year on rural institutions best practices.
- V. Database of farmer organizations and rural institutions.
- VI. Stakeholder engagement reports and meeting minutes
- VII. End-of-assignment report with handover notes, sustainability recommendations, and exit strategy for supported institutions.
- VIII. Ad-hoc reports, training materials, and field mission reports as required.

4.0 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

The ideal candidate must demonstrate the following minimum requirements:

Education: Master's degree (or equivalent) in Rural Development, Agricultural Economics, Agribusiness, Development Studies, Sociology/Anthropology, or a related social science discipline. A Bachelor's degree with additional relevant professional certifications (e.g., in cooperative governance or project management) may be considered with exceptional experience.

Experience:

- I. Minimum of 7 years of progressive relevant professional experience in rural development projects, with at least 4 years focused on farmer organization/cooperative strengthening, group mobilization, institutional capacity building, or agribusiness development in Nigeria or similar African contexts.
- II. Proven track record in designing and implementing capacity-building programmes for smallholder groups, including experience with value chain development, market linkages, and financial inclusion (e.g., FSA or VSLA models).
- III. Familiarity with donor-funded agricultural projects (AfDB, IFAD, World Bank, etc.), including safeguards, gender mainstreaming, and M&E frameworks.

- IV. Experience working with government institutions (FMAFS, ADPs, State Ministries) and multi-stakeholder platforms is highly desirable.
- V. Demonstrated field experience in at least 3 geo-political zones of Nigeria.

Skills and Competencies:

- I. Strong technical knowledge of rural institutions, cooperative laws, governance, and sustainability models in Nigeria.
- II. Excellent project coordination, facilitation, and stakeholder engagement skills.
- III. Superior report writing, presentation, and analytical skills (proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite, data analysis tools, and report formatting).
- IV. Ability to work independently, under pressure, and in multicultural teams.
- V. Fluency in English (written and spoken); knowledge of at least one Nigerian local language (Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, or Efik) is an advantage.
- VI. Willingness to undertake frequent field travel (up to 40% of time).

Age and Other: Candidates should be between 30–50 years and must be a Nigerian citizen.

5.0 DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The assignment is for an initial period of **12 months**, renewable for up to the remaining duration of the SAPZ Programme Phase I, subject to satisfactory performance and continued Programme funding. A probation period of 3 months applies. The contract may be terminated with 30 days' notice by either party.

6.0 REPORTING AND SUPERVISION

- I. **Direct Supervisor:** The Technical Assistant will report directly to the National Rural Institutions Development Officer (NRIDO).

- II. **Overall Oversight:** The TA will receive secondary oversight from the National Project Coordinator (NPC) to ensure alignment with the overall programme objectives.
- III. The TA will submit monthly activity reports to the RIDO and participate in NCO coordination meetings. Performance will be appraised quarterly using the Programme's results-based management system.

7.0 REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

- I. Remuneration will be competitive and in line with AfDB/IFAD-financed project scales for national Technical Assistants (to be determined during contract negotiation, inclusive of all allowances).
- II. The position is full-time, based at the NCO in Abuja, with provision for official travel (per diem, accommodation, and transport as per Programme guidelines).
- III. The TA must adhere to the Programme's Code of Conduct, anti-corruption policies, Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), and all fiduciary, safeguard, and reporting requirements of AfDB, IFAD, and IsDB.

8.0 KEY DELIVERABLES

The Technical Assistant shall deliver the following outputs, subject to approval by the NRIDO:

Deliverable Timeline

- I. Inception Report: Detailed work plan, understanding of the ToR, and a stakeholder mapping matrix. Within 15 days of signing
- II. Quarterly Progress Reports: Structured report detailing achievements, challenges, M&E data updates, and financial expenditure on capacity building activities. End of each quarter

- III. Annual Performance Report: Comprehensive summary of the year's activities, impact assessment on rural institutions, and recommendations for the subsequent year. End of Year 1
- IV. Database Management System: An updated and fully functional MIS of all rural institutions engaged under the SAPZ programme. Ongoing, updated monthly
- V. Training & Workshop Reports: Reports on all capacity-building events, including attendance sheets, pre/post-training evaluations, and action plans. Within 10 days of event completion

9.0 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ETHICS

The Technical Assistant will be bound by the confidentiality policies of the NPCU and the financing partners. The TA must adhere to the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and professionalism. Any form of fraud, corruption, or conflict of interest will result in immediate termination and may lead to legal proceedings. The TA is required to sign the programme's Code of Conduct and adhere strictly to the provisions regarding Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH).

10.0 TERMS OF PAYMENT

Payment will be made on a monthly retainer basis, subject to the submission of a monthly timesheet and a brief activity report approved by the NRIDO. The contract is output-based; unsatisfactory performance or failure to deliver agreed-upon outputs may result in termination with one month's notice.

11.0 Remunerations

The remuneration for this assignment shall be negotiable based on current market situation and consultancy fees available in other donor funded projects and not exceeding the provision in the approved monthly performance incentives.